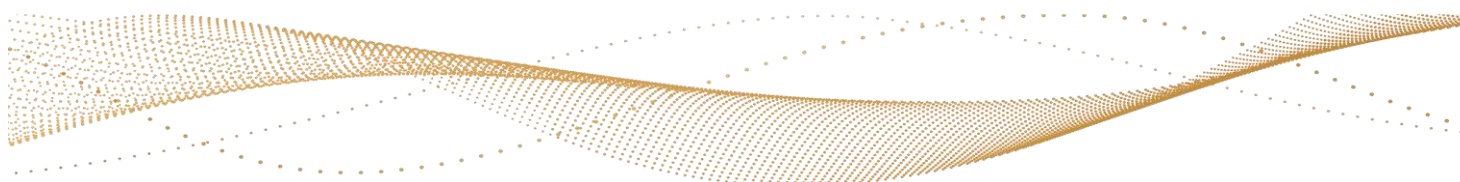


BUDAPEST INTERNATIONAL CELLO COMPETITION 2025

RULES & REGULATIONS

Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music • Budapest • 8–14 September 2025

Organizer: Filharmonia Hungary Nonprofit Ltd.



1. ORGANIZER AND VENUE

Filharmonia Hungary Concert and Festival Organization Nonprofit Limited Liability Company (hereinafter: the Organizer) announces the 2025 Budapest International Cello Competition within the framework of the Budapest International Music Competitions, to be held at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music.

2. COMPETITION SCHEDULE

- Application deadline: April 15, 2025.
- First Round – Pre-Selection (video): April 15–30, 2025.
- Second Round – Preliminary Round: September 8–9, 2025.
- Third Round – Semi-Final: September 11, 2025.
- Fourth Round – Final: September 13, 2025.
- Gala Concert: September 14, 2025.

In the Pre-Selection and the Preliminary Round, competitors may perform from sheet music. In the Semi-Final and the Final, the use of sheet music during performance is not permitted.

Artistic Director: István Várdai.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPETITION

3.1 Pre-Selection (video)

Repertoire:

- J. S. Bach: Cello Suites — video recording of three movements freely chosen.
- Additionally, either one work chosen from the Preliminary Round List II (below) recorded on video; or a solo cello work composed after 1940 (movement(s) totaling 5–10 minutes) recorded on video.

Preliminary Round — List II:

- Kodály: Sonata for Solo Cello, Op. 8 (one movement, freely chosen).
- Ligeti: Sonata for Solo Cello.
- Dutilleux: Trois strophes sur le nom de Sacher.
- Sándor Veress: Sonata for Cello.

Works performed in the Pre-Selection may be repeated in the Preliminary Round as works chosen from the respective lists.

Based on the submitted application materials, the jury will select the competitors admitted to the Preliminary Round.

Successful applicants will be notified by e-mail no later than April 30, 2025; in parallel, the list of competitors admitted to the Preliminary Round will be published on the competition website. A maximum of 15 applicants may be admitted.

By submitting an application, competitors acknowledge that recordings may be made of the competition rounds. Competitors shall have no financial claim whatsoever against Filharmonia Hungary Nonprofit Ltd. in relation to the use (including any remuneration) of such recordings.

Competitors admitted to the Preliminary Round must submit to the Organizer the final list of works they intend to perform by August 20, 2025.

3.2 Second Round – Preliminary Round

Dates: September 8–9, 2025 (Draw and Opening: September 7).

Venue: Liszt Academy, Solti Hall (1061 Budapest, Liszt Ferenc tér 8.).

Performance time: 55 minutes per competitor.

Requirements:

One work chosen from List I:

- Beethoven: Cello Sonata No. 3 in A major, Op. 69.
- Beethoven: Cello Sonata No. 4 in C major, Op. 102 No. 1.
- Beethoven: Cello Sonata No. 5 in D major, Op. 102 No. 2.
- Brahms: Cello Sonata No. 1 in E minor.
- Brahms: Cello Sonata No. 2 in F major.

One work chosen from List II:

- Kodály: Sonata for Solo Cello, Op. 8 (one movement, freely chosen).
- Ligeti: Sonata for Solo Cello.
- Dutilleul: Trois strophes sur le nom de Sacher.
- Sándor Veress: Sonata for Cello.
- A solo cello work composed after 1940 (movement(s) totaling 5–10 minutes), freely chosen.

Renowned collaborative pianists will participate in this round.

Piano rehearsals: September 7–8, 2025, in designated practice rooms at the Liszt Academy.

The order of appearance will be determined by drawing lots. On September 7, in the presence of the assembled competitors, a letter will be drawn to determine the first performer; the order then follows alphabetically by family name and remains in effect until the end of the competition.

After the results of the round have been calculated, the names of the competitors advancing to the Semi-Final will be published by midnight on the closing day of the Preliminary Round in alphabetical order. A maximum of 6 competitors may advance to the Semi-Final.

3.3 Third Round – Semi-Final

Date: September 11, 2025.

Venue: Liszt Academy, Solti Hall (1061 Budapest, Liszt Ferenc tér 8.).

Performance time: 55 minutes per competitor.

Requirements:

One work chosen from List I:

- C. P. E. Bach: Cello Concerto in A major.
- J. Haydn: Cello Concerto in C major.
- J. Haydn: Cello Concerto in D major.

One work chosen from List II:

- Schumann: Cello Concerto (version with string orchestra).
- Tchaikovsky: Variations on a Rococo Theme.
- Mieczysław Weinberg: Cello Concerto, Op. 43 bis (1948).

Collaborating ensemble: Liszt Ferenc Chamber Orchestra.

In the Semi-final, competitors must perform without sheet music.

The names of the competitors advancing to the Final will be published by midnight on the day of the Semi-Final in alphabetical order. A maximum of 3 competitors may advance.

3.4 Fourth Round – Final

Date: September 13, 2025.

Venue: Liszt Academy, Great Hall (1061 Budapest, Liszt Ferenc tér 8.).

Each competitor must select one of the following concertos:

- Shostakovich: Cello Concerto No. 1.
- Prokofiev: Sinfonia Concertante, Op. 125.

- Dvořák: Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104.

Orchestra: Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra.

Conductor: György Vashegyi.

After the concerto, one freely chosen movement from J. S. Bach's Cello Suites must be performed.

In the Final, competitors must perform without sheet music.

Following the calculation of the Final results, the winners will be announced in reverse order of placement during the official Award Ceremony at the Gala Concert.

3.5 Gala Concert

Date: September 14, 2025.

Venue: Liszt Academy, Grand Hall (1061 Budapest, Liszt Ferenc tér 8.).

The Gala Concert program will be compiled by the Jury, selecting from works the prize-winners performed during the competition. Prize-winners (including holders of special prizes, if notified by the Competition Secretariat during their stay) are required to perform at the Gala Concert without honorarium.

4. PRIZES

- First Prize: EUR 18,000.
- Second Prize: EUR 12,000.
- Third Prize: EUR 6,000.
- Audience Prize: EUR 2,000.
- Prize for the Best Performance of Kodály's Work: EUR 1,000.
- Special Prize: Concert engagements within a concert tour in Hungary.
- All finalists receive a diploma.

Winners will receive high-quality recordings of all rounds, which they are entitled to use under the following conditions: rights may not be transferred; the recordings may not be republished; and they may not be used for commercial purposes. They may be published on the winners' own platforms—official websites, YouTube channels, or similar video platforms—with credit to Filharmonia Hungary.

5. SPECIAL OFFER

From among the applicants who do not advance from the Pre-Selection to the Preliminary Round, the Jury will select three applicants to receive a one-hour cello masterclass with István Várdai or another jury member on September 12, 2025, in Budapest. The Organizer will provide accommodation for the day of the masterclass for the selected applicants.

In addition to the prizes listed above, numerous international and Hungarian institutions—festivals and concert presenters—offer special prizes and performance contracts to the prize-winners. The Jury may not award tied prizes and may not withhold any of the prizes.

6. JURY

The Jury hears the competitors, assesses their performances from an artistic perspective, decides on advancement to the Preliminary Round, Semi-Final, and Final, and determines the prize-winners.

Competitors and Jury members acknowledge that, for as long as a competitor remains in the competition, they may not enter into direct contact with each other—verbally or in writing—outside the competition setting at the initiative of either party. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification.

The duties of the Jury Secretary are performed by a designated staff member. The Jury Secretary participates in meetings without voting rights and assists Jury members in resolving any issues related to the competition.

Composition of the International Jury:

The seven-member International Jury: Anne Gastinel, András Keller, Jens Peter Maintz, Frans Helmerson (Chair), Gwen Starker, Santiago Cañón Valencia, and István Várdai.

At the end of each competition day, the Jury meets to evaluate and discuss the performances presented.

In the Pre-Selection and in every subsequent round, the Jury evaluates each competitor on a 40-point scale, according to the following criteria (maximum 10 points per criterion):

- Technical proficiency.
- Musical expressivity.
- Informed interpretation of the works.
- Artistic individuality.

The maximum achievable score is 40 points; the minimum is 0 points. Jury members may add notes on the evaluation sheet.

In addition, each Jury member must indicate for every competitor an individual YES/NO vote regarding advancement.

Based on this, the Jury Secretary establishes the list of competitors advancing to the next round and, after the Final, the ranking of the prize-winners.

Completed evaluation sheets are submitted immediately after the last competitor of the round leaves the stage. Jury members write the score on the sheet, authenticate it with their signature, and place it in a sealed ballot box, which the Jury Secretary circulates at the end of the rounds.

After the sheets are placed in the ballot box and before counting begins, Jury members may no longer modify the submitted scores.

At the post-round Jury meeting, the Jury Secretary and the Competition Secretary present the aggregate average scores and the order resulting from the YES/NO advancement votes. Minutes are drawn up and authenticated by the signatures of the Jury members at the end of the meeting.

A simple majority of YES votes determines advancement; the aggregate average scores determine ranking. In the event of a tie resulting from equal average scores, the Chair decides which competitor advances.

If a family relationship and/or an active teacher-student relationship exists between a competitor and a Jury member during the competition, the Jury member concerned may not vote on or evaluate that competitor.

In such a case, with respect to YES/NO votes, the Chair's vote counts double. If the Chair is the conflicted party, the Artistic Director of the Competition has the double vote.

Where a conflict of interest exists, the competitor's score shall be determined as follows: instead of the score of the disqualified Jury member, the average of the remaining Jury members' scores—calculated after discarding the highest and lowest scores—shall be used.

If, under a conflict-of-interest situation, a tie persists due to equal average scores, the eligible Jury members shall reassess the competitors based on their score sheets and notes, cast a new YES/NO vote, and, if necessary, re-score the competitors.

Scores are strictly confidential; however, after the competition has concluded, participants in the rounds may request access to the aggregate scores.

The Jury's decisions are final and not subject to appeal. However, if a competitor's exclusion, omission, or lack of evaluation is clearly due to an administrative error, the Organizer may—before the announcement of the results of the given round—apply a correction on its own authority or in consultation with the Jury, in order to preserve the integrity of the competition.

7. APPLICATION

Application deadline: April 15, 2025, 23:59 CET.

Age limit: The competition is open to cellists of any nationality born on or after September 1, 1995.

Applications may be submitted only by completing the online application form and sending an e-mail to competition@filharmonia.hu with all mandatory attachments.

The following documents must be attached to the e-mail:

- Copy of proof of payment of the entry fee.
- Identity card (EU citizens only) or passport (EU and non-EU citizens).
- Artistic/professional curriculum vita
- One recent photograph of the applicant (minimum size 2–3 MB).

Three (3) unedited video files provided as shared links:

- 1) A presentation video of the applicant, maximum 60 seconds.
- 2) J. S. Bach: Cello Suites — recording of three movements, unedited, performed in a single take.
- 3) One work chosen from Preliminary Round List II, or a solo cello work composed after 1940 (movement(s) totaling 5–10 minutes), recorded on video.

Video submission requirements for the Pre-Selection (YouTube links):

- Videos must be no more than 6 months old as of the date of application.
- Hands and the entire body must be clearly visible throughout.
- Each repertoire item must be recorded in a single, continuous take; in total, three (3) videos are required.
- Videos must be uploaded to YouTube as unlisted (not public) links.

The application becomes complete and final once the online form has been submitted and all requested attachments—including the three video links—have been sent by e-mail to competition@filharmonia.hu.

For competitors admitted to the Preliminary Round, Semi-Final, and Final, the Organizer will provide accommodation for the duration of the rounds. Competitors acknowledge that, beyond accommodation costs, all other expenses related to participation are borne by themselves, and they shall not assert any claims against Filharmonia Hungary Nonprofit Ltd. on any grounds.

By submitting their data upon application, competitors voluntarily consent to receiving information about the competition from Filharmonia Hungary Nonprofit Ltd. at the e-mail address provided. Personal data will be processed in accordance with applicable laws and the Organizer's data

protection and data processing policy. Further information is available in the Privacy Notice accessible on the Organizer's website.

8. ENTRY FEE

Entry fee: EUR 80.

Application deadline: April 15, 2025, 23:59 CET.

- The entry fee is non-refundable if the applicant does not advance.
- By submitting the application, the applicant accepts that the entry fee is non-refundable for any reason, including administrative errors, withdrawal, or failure to advance.
- Notification deadline: April 30, 2025.

Please transfer the entry fee to the Organizer's bank account:

- IBAN: HU69 10004885-10002010-00223335
- BIC (SWIFT) code: HUSTHUHB
- Hungarian State Treasury, 1139 Budapest, Váci út 71.
- Please indicate the competitor's name and the competition name as follows: "Minta Aladár – BICC".

9. AUDIENCE VOTING

- From among the participants in the Final, the audience will have the opportunity to award one competitor the Audience Prize.
- Voting will be open from the beginning of the Final until one hour after the performance of the last competitor.
- Audience members present at the venue cast their votes by placing their ballot into a sealed ballot box located in the public areas. Each person may cast one vote only; a vote is valid exclusively if marked with a single "X" or "+" symbol next to the chosen competitor's name on the authenticated ballot provided upon entry.
- Online viewers may also vote. During the livestreams, a website will be displayed where voting is possible during the broadcast and for one hour thereafter. Further information on the voting procedure will be available via a link on the online platforms. Each person may cast one vote only; for verification, the voting system will record an e-mail address.

10. COPYRIGHT AND CONSENTS

The competition is a media event at which Filharmonia Hungary Nonprofit Ltd. (hereinafter: the Company) or a media service provider commissioned by it may make and broadcast recordings.

The competitor authorizes and agrees that their name and likeness may be used in the Company's printed and electronic materials advertising or reporting on the competition and on the Internet in accordance with professional practice.

The competitor consents to the making of photographs, videos and/or audio recordings of them in connection with the competition, for the purpose of publication and use in newspapers, magazines, online news portals, publications about the competition, on the Company's website and intranet, on the Company's social media pages, on its YouTube and Vimeo channels, and for promotional purposes related to the competition. Use of the recordings is not limited in time but is restricted to the promotion, documentation, and professional presentation of the competition.

By applying to the competition, the competitor waives the right to control the use of the photographs and video recordings made of them. The competitor shall have no financial claims whatsoever against Filharmonia Hungary Nonprofit Ltd. in this regard. After the competition has concluded, the competitor may request that recordings of them be removed from Filharmonia Hungary's social media platforms and its own website, provided that such removal does not affect the documentation and professional purposes of the competition.

From the commencement of the competition until its conclusion, the competitor agrees to be available free of charge—upon the Company's request—for media interviews, photo shoots, and any other activities that may be important for the competition.

11. LEGAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

In the event of any dispute arising during the competition, the Hungarian-language version of these Rules and Regulations shall prevail.

For legal disputes arising between the competitor and the Organizer, the parties submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Hungarian courts and agree that Hungarian law shall apply.

To resolve disputes or to modify the awards compared to their original announcement, the Jury shall consult with the Managing Director of Filharmonia Hungary Concert and Festival Organization Nonprofit Ltd.; for each round, the decision shall be made by the

Dean/Chair of the Jury. In the case of administrative errors, wrongful exclusion, or other technical issues, the Organizer reserves the right to make corrections and shall notify the affected party in writing.

The Organizer reserves the right to make changes to the announced performers.

The Budapest International Cello Competition is open to the public.

Participation in the Competition constitutes acceptance of these Rules and Regulations.